India's role in the new round of negotiation under WTO

*207. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:
SHRI SANTOSH BAGRODIA:

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether india has been put to a great preasure recently form European Union to agree to the relaunch of a new round of negotiation under the World Trade Organisation (WTO);

(b) if so, whether India has agreed to such negotiations; and

(c) if not, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (SHRI OMAR ABDULLAH): (a) to (c) In their interaction with India at various levels, the European Union has been seeking India's endorsement to the launch of a new round of negotiations under the WTO with a comprehensive agenda. A similar effort was made by European Union and other developed countries during the preparations for, and in, the Third Ministerial Conference of WTO at Seattle, USA in November-December 1999. As the discussions at the Third Ministerial Conference of WTO at Seattle were inconclusive, there was no decision for the launch of any new round of negotiations. At this point of time, there is no decision in the WTO to launch any new round of negotiations other than the mandated negotiations as have been provided under the various WTO agreements.

India is not in favour of overloading the WTO agenda with wide-ranging new round of negotiations and is, in any case opposed to adding of new non-trade issues on the WTO agenda such as core labour standards, environmental issues, coherent global architecture, investment, competition policy and involvement of non-governmental organisations in negotiations. India is, however, prepared for a few new items being taken up for negotiations, provided the implementation issues arising from the Uruguay Round are also resolved to its satisfaction.

Supply of Newsprint to Newspapers

†*208. PROF. R.B.S. VARMA: Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

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†Original notice of the Question was received in Hindi.

(a) whether it is a fact that Goverment provide newsprint to newspapers at lower rates;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) the details of the quantum of newsprint provided to some major newspapers in the country during the last three years; and

(d) whether it is also a fact that full utilisation of the allotted quota by Government is not being done?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY (DR. RAMAN): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) There is no statutory control over the prices of newsprint. The newspapers are free to use either imported newsprint or indigenously produced newsprint.

Proposal to take over IDPL (Tamil Nadu Unit)

*209. SHRI GAYA SINGH:
SHRI V. V. RAGHAVAN:

Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that her Ministry is considering a proposal to take over the IDPL (Tamil Nadu Unit) from the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers for its revival;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether it is also a fact that a representative from Artificial Limbs Manufacturing Corporation of India (ALIMCO) under the instructions of C&MD, ALIMCO had visited the IDPL (TN) plant and had a detailed study about the plant; and

(d) if so, the details of the report submitted and further steps being taken for revival of the plant?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRIMATI MANEKA GANDHI): (a) to (c) Although there is no formal proposal from the Ministry of Chemicals and Fertilizers, the administrative Ministry of Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals Limited for bringing Indian Drugs and Pharmaceuticals (Tamil Nadu)